# Canaries in a coal mine: The *cayuco* migrant crisis and the europeanization of migration policy

Canarios en una mina: la crisis migratoria de los cayucos y la europeización de la política migratoria

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### Abstract

Understanding how the Spanish state and the Canary Islands dealt with the *cayuco* crisis and its aftermath is instructional for the current migrant crisis facing Europe. Employing the theoretical lenses of liberal intergovernmentalism and neo-institutionalism, this article studies how the EU has shaped the governance of migration policy using both hard and soft governance. Hard governance refers to coercive legally imposed mechanisms, whereas soft governance may be cooperation or voluntary adoption of EU models. During the *cayuco* crisis, as thousands of African migrants arrived to the Canary Islands, the Spanish government sought assistance from the EU and its member states via Frontex, and adopted the EU's externalization of migration policy with Plan Africa, an aid package to stop immigration at its source. Both Frontex and Plan Africa were EU policy prescriptions, that exhibit EU soft governance and the Europeanization of migration policy. As a result, Spain achieved its goal of stopping the flow of irregular migrants, yet the state remained the main actor in migration policy, as liberal intergovernmentalists assert. However, the EU-inspired policies that Spain ultimately adopted during the *cayuco* crisis have been emulated in the current migrant crisis, inspiring a model for present and future migration policies in Europe.

Keywords: migration policy, soft governance, europeanization, Spain, Canary Islands.

#### Resumen

Entender cómo el Estado español y las Islas Canarias lidiaron con la crisis de los cayucos y sus consecuencias es esencial para comprender la actual crisis migratoria a la que se enfrenta Europa. Empleando las lentes teóricas del intergubernamentalismo liberal y el neoinstitucionalismo, este artículo estudia cómo la UE ha configurado la gobernanza de la política migratoria utilizando gobernanza dura y blanda. Gobernanza dura se refiere a los mecanismos coercitivos legalmente impuestos, mientras que la gobernanza blanda puede ser la cooperación o la adopción voluntaria de modelos de la UE. Durante la crisis del cayuco, cuando miles de inmigrantes irregulares africanos llegaron a las Islas Canarias, el Gobierno español buscó el apoyo de los Estados miembro a través de Frontex y adoptó la externalización de la política de migración de la UE con el Plan África, un paquete de ayuda para detener la inmigración en su lugar de origen. Tanto Frontex como el Plan África fueron modelos políticos de la UE, lo que demuestra la gobernanza blanda de la UE y la europeización de la política migratoria. Como resultado, España logró su objetivo de detener el flujo de inmigrantes irregulares, pero el Estado siguió siendo el principal actor en la política migratoria, tal y como afirman los autores intergubernamentales liberales. Sin embargo, las políticas inspiradas en la UE que finalmente adoptó España durante la crisis del cayuco se han emulado en la actual crisis migratoria, inspirando un modelo para las políticas migratorias presentes y futuras en Europa.

Palabras clave: política migratoria, gobernanza blanda, europeización, España, Islas Canarias.

### INTRODUCTION

The ongoing migration crisis in Europe, beginning in the summer of 2015, appeared to emerge quite suddenly and the EU and its member states have struggled to process irregular migrants, to provide assistance to these immigrants as EU and international law require, to integrate them into society and to deter their entrance in large numbers. Buonanno (2017) points out that the European Council President Herman Van Rompuy suggested that there were signs of a migration problem in 2013 and 2014, but the *cayuco* crisis demonstrates that warning signs were even earlier. The *cayuco* crisis, a mass migration flow from West Africa to the Canary Islands between 2006 and 2009, showed that migration was already increasing at that time and it also provided an example for the EU and its member states of how to respond to such a crisis. Although the current crisis is of a much larger scale and has directly affected more member states, the response to the *cayuco* crisis offers a model and understanding of policy responses to increased migration flows into Europe.

This article will examine how EU soft governance shaped the migration policy applied in the Canary Islands during the *cayuco* crisis, and how the Spanish government addressed the crisis adopting EU policy prescriptions to promote development in the countries at the source of migration and to create readmission agreements with countries of origin to stem the migration flow. Spain's handling of the *cayuco* crisis

demonstrates the Europeanization of migration policy, which has been emulated in the larger current migrant crisis, and has been upheld by public officials as a successful policy initiative<sup>1</sup>. For instance, French Minister of the Interior, Gérard Collomb, explained that the Spanish government's response to the *cayuco* crisis stands as an example of how to deal with the current migration from Africa, specifically referring to how Spain created agreements with states of origin, which helped to stop the flow of immigrants and ended the crisis<sup>2</sup>.

Crises have shaped how the EU, national and lower levels of government respond to problems, exacerbating the constant tension about 'where power lies in the EU system' (Graziano and Halpern, 2016) or the extent to which supranational institutions may address crises (Schmitter, 1970; Tosun *et al.*, 2014). The term crisis comes from a Latin medical term at the turning point of a disease, resulting in either death or recovery (Guiraudon, 2018). Thus, a crisis presents governments with a condition under which they will either succeed or fail, and where failure could lead to dire consequences. Although crises come in many forms, they usually include threat, urgency and uncertainty. Crises force government to remedy a situation while, at the same time, may place restrictions on what governments can actually do. How governments—at supranational, national, regional and local levels—respond to crises may have significant repercussions on governance and policy implementation in the future.

The *cayuco* crisis is of importance since it triggered the first aero-maritime intervention by the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the EU (Frontex). The crisis demonstrated: (1) how southern European countries experienced greater migration pressures compared to their northern counterparts, (2) how migrants found new routes as older routes in North Africa were closed, (3) how Frontex's actions intercepting migrant filled boats could be of assistance saving lives, and (4) how the use of bilateral cooperation and development programs could deter further migration all problems and policy strategies found in the current migrant crisis (Finotelli, 2018; Finotelli and Ponzo, 2017; D. Godenau, interview, July 6 2016; Ripoll Servent and Trauner, 2018). The recent migrant crisis that began during the summer of 2015 is much more widespread across Europe. There is a large wave of people fleeing war in the Middle East, especially from Syria and Afghanistan. However, African countries are still an important source of migrants and the uneven exposure to the crisis across member states persists, with Southern Europe bearing most pressures, a similar condition experienced during the cayuco crisis (Buonanno, 2017; Finotelli, 2018). The cayuco crisis provides a critical case to understand how EU hard and soft governance shaped the response to the crisis providing a lens to understand how the EU and member states shape current and future migration crises.

<sup>1.</sup> Efe. 2017. «Francia pone el caso de Canarias como ejemplo ante la inmigración de África», *El Diario*. Available at: https://bit.ly/2VwznE8.

<sup>2.</sup> Id.

The article will first examine the EU's use of hard and soft governance with an examination of neo-institutionalism (the mulit-level governance model and new modes of governance) juxtaposed with liberal intergovernmentalism, and the central role of the state, in shaping migration policy. Next, the *cayuco* crisis is analysed to demonstrate how the externalization of European migration policy was adopted by the Spanish state to stave off the crisis. The article concludes using the experience of the *cayuco* crisis as a way of understanding EU policy regarding the recent migrant crisis beginning in 2015.

## HARD AND SOFT GOVERNANCE: WHAT IS THE EU'S ROLE IN MIGRATION POLICY?

The notions of EU hard and soft governance are central to understanding how and in what way does the EU influence policy governance. Governance is "societies' collective steering and management" that is constantly changing (Peters, 2002: 1). There are continual pressures to transform governance, that is, how government develops and implements policies (Peters, 2002). Within the context of the EU, much of the literature has focused on the concept of governance as it relates to 'power relations... as well as the substance of policies' (van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004: 149). Within this context, neo-institutionalists suggest that governance, or power relations exist across various levels of government and among non-state actors. Some of them have asserted that the EU is a political system with identifiable executive, legislative, and judicial features that constitutes another level of government with which the national, regional, and local levels of government all share power (Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Marks, 1993; Pierre and Peters, 2005).

One perspective within neo-institutionalism is multi-level governance (MLG), that suggests that the EU adds a supranational layer of government with which national governments have to share authority in addition to subnational actors, both public and private (Hooghe and Marks, 2001; van Kersbergen and van Waarden, 2004). MLG implies that several actors participate in the policymaking process, and that the state does not hold the leading role any longer; instead, it is supranational, subnational and other private and public actors such as NGOs which legislate and implement laws (Hooghe and Marks, 2001; Bevir, 2008; Pierre and Peters, 2005). Although this approach still recognizes the role of the state, it also suggests that the state has been weakened by European integration. Governance has been transformed as EU policymaking becomes non-hierarchical (Pierre and Peters, 2005; Tommel and Verdun, 2013). In this way, scholars suggest that there are New Modes of Governance (NMG), also termed soft governance, that entail networks or relations across various levels of government and between state and non-state actors (Bevir, 2008; Dehousse, 2016; Majone, 1999; Tommel and Verdun, 2013).

As Tommel and Verdun (2013) and Dehousse (2016) assert, NMG may not be so new, and they occur in areas where the EU does and does not have competencies.

Whichever term of NMG is used, the underlying idea is that coercion is not the center of EU policymaking and implementation, but rather cooperation and sharing of ideas, thus, shifting policy competencies across different levels of government and among both state and non-state actors. Andy Smith (2003) asserts that the application of the MLG model needs to be improved with consideration of orders of change or 'the modification of policy instruments,' which refers to whether policy change is superficial or more far reaching. (Smith, 2003: 624). In the *cayuco* crisis we witness a far reaching order of change with the implementation of significantly new policy instruments including: the actions of Frontex, with the support of member states, and the creation of agreements with third party countries, demonstrate a departure from the past, making the *cayuco* crisis a useful case to utilize the lens of MLG and NMG.

A competing perspective, the state-centric or liberal intergovernmentalist perspective, asserts that states remain central to governance within the EU as European integration is seen as a succession of bargains among states acting in their rational self-interest (Moravcsik, 2001; 1994). This model implies that member states remain the key actors within the European context and policy-making. Thus, there is a hierarchical order and member states remain central actors.

According to both theoretical perspectives, governance can be defined as 'where power lies in the EU system...and power is the capacity of actors to obtain decisions that are in line with their preferences' (Graziano and Halpern, 2016: 2). Within the context of migration policy in the EU, there is an ongoing debate regarding which of these perspectives, neo-institutionalist or liberal intergovernmentalist, defines more accurately which level or levels of government, is most involved in the governance of EU migration policy or whose preferences shape decisions including policies and policy outcomes.

The issue about hard and soft governance is related to the question about where power lies. Soft governance refers to "non-coercive and informal modes of governance" or NMG, that is, the open method of coordination or relations within policy networks, which tends to be non-hierarchical and voluntary (Dehousse, 2016; Graziano and Halpern, 2016). On the other hand, hard governance is much more coercive, whereby the EU uses hard law instruments to force policy compliance (Dehousse, 2016; Graziano and Halpern, 2016). Hard governance includes Commission initiatives as well as EU legislation. EU hard governance implies a weakening of the state, whereas soft governance can imply a strengthening of both the EU and the state, and does not necessarily mean a weakening of the state or a zero sum relationship as some models suggest (Marks, 1993).

The single market and the need for the free movement of people and goods to achieve it, became a fundamental policy area of the EU. However, the movement of people across borders had been a central policy area of the state, which the EU also needed to regulate (Guiraudon, 2000). The basis of EU hard governance, as it relates to migration policy, begins with the incorporation of the Schengen Agreement into the EU legal framework by the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997. As a

result, the EU has been given more authority in the area of migration. Questions regarding border control, immigration and visas had been historically the purview of national governments (Guiraudon, 2000); after the Treaty of Amsterdam, however, the responsibility for migration control has become "multi-level" with the EU playing a new role in immigration, visa and asylum policies (Carrera and Allsopp, 2018; Guiraudon, 2000). The backdrop of Schengen was the goal of the completion of the single market; this included the dissolution of internal borders which, in turn, required control of external borders (Cornelisse, 2014). To facilitate binding rules for cooperation, the Schengen Agreement included: "Common standards applying to people crossing the external borders of the EU Member States, harmonisation of the conditions of entry and the rules on visas for short stays, enhanced police cooperation, [...] stronger judicial cooperation through a faster extradition system and transfer of enforcement of criminal judgments" (European Commission, 2010: 1).

Although Schengen was intended to promote an EU-wide approach to immigration issues, regarding migration and asylum, the policies of member states, as well as lower levels of government, as well as non-governmental actors working across all levels of government have shaped immigration policy and practice (Guiraudon, 2000). As Cornelisse points out, Schengen faces "structural inequalities and asymmetric shocks". The structural inequality is that geographic location and condition of borders (maritime, rugged mountains), has an impact on migration patterns, not all member states have islands off the coast of Africa as Spain and Italy do. Moreover, as southern Europe faces greater pressures of migration, there is an asymmetry in the occurrence of migration or "shock" (2014: 12). Thus, although one could argue that Schengen created hard governance shaping EU migration policy, member states remain of central importance in the protection of their own borders and the implementation of the policy standards the EU sets forth.

As for soft governance, it can be found in EU policy prescriptions and member state best practices shared within EU policy networks. Examples of soft mechanisms regarding migration policy might include the Tampere Council of 1999 or the functioning of Frontex. The Tampere Council was a special meeting held focusing on the creation of "an area of freedom, security and justice in the European Union" (European Parliament, 1999). Key policy prescriptions coming out of this meeting included: promoting development programs in the country of origin to stop migration at its source and a broader strategy to address illegal immigration recommending readmission agreements with countries of origin (European Council, 1999). Also emerging from the Tampere Council was the recognition of the need to have greater coordination among members states as it relates to controlling the EU's external borders (Mungiano, 2013). Although member states are the main actors within Frontex, the EU facilitates negotiations among member states and does create an atmosphere of intergovernmental cooperation in which both member states and EU institutions together were responsible for the creation of Frontex (Mungiano, 2013). Frontex has created an opportunity for networks to be formed among experts

across member states in the field of border controls and interception of irregular migrants and smugglers and has facilitated dialogue and cooperation among member states for specific Frontex operations (interview with D. Godenau held on July 6, 2016; interview with a member of the of the National Police Force, held on August 11, 2016).

Related to hard and soft governance, one of the central questions within EU migration policy is whether or to what extent member states give authority to the EU (European Commission, 2010). On one hand, some scholars assert that the EU has actually enhanced the role of the state and strengthened sovereignty in a way that fortifies a state's capacity to govern (Schain, 2009). On the other hand, applying some Europeanization literature, other scholars assert that EU law constrains the state with European rules and obligations, hard governance, such as Schengen, that must be enforced (Menz, 2010; Rosenow, 2009). Europeanization literature, which is quite diverse, generally suggests that the EU has a role in shaping domestic politics creating policy convergence across Europe using both hard and soft governance (Bach *et al.*, 2015; Green Cowles *et al.*, 2001; Menz, 2010; Radaelli, 2000). Radaelli's (2000) exploration of Europeanization literature defines Europeanization as

Processes of (a)construction (b) diffusion (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rule, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, 'ways of doing things' and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU decisions and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies (p. 4).

Similar to the "second-image reversed" idea which suggests the international system impacts domestic politics and viceversa, the EU influences what policies member states adopt, and member states contribute to the shaping of EU policy (Gourevitch, 1978; Radealli, 2000). If the EU is strengthening the role of the state in migration policy and/or shaping migration policy, the concepts of EU hard and soft governance are central to understand how migration policy is shaped within member states and in the EU. Is the EU able to use coercive (hard) or non-coercive (soft) mechanisms to influence member states and subsequently shape the governance of migration policy? In the context of the *cayuco* crisis, what was the role of the EU in shaping migration policy implementation and governance in the Canary Islands: hard or soft governance?

### THE CAYUCO CRISIS

Prior to the *cayuco* crisis, African irregular migrants began arriving on small wooden fishing boats called *pateras*. The first *patera* arrived at Fuerteventura, one of the Eastern islands, in 1994 with two Saharawis on board. *Pateras* are very light

fishing boats that can barely float in waters with strong ocean currents. The number of *pateras* increased as more migrants risked their lives on the perilous journey to the Canary Islands. The situation worsened as smugglers overloaded the boats. Travelers faced conditions of hypothermia, dehydration, disease and overcrowding (Amnesty International, 2006; Castellano, 2016). Because *pateras* were small boats and the number of migrants was not very large, the processing and integration of immigrants into Canary society was not particularly problematic. Until 2000, immigrants were Saharawis and, since there was no government in Western Sahara with whom to negotiate a repatriation agreement, they stayed in the islands.

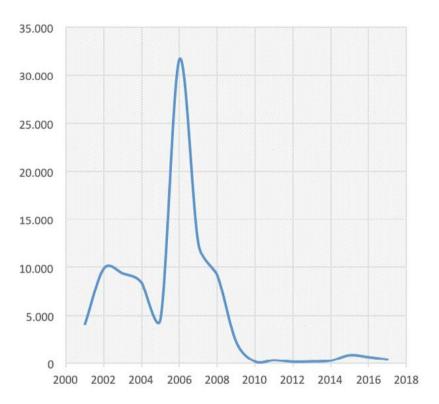
The challenging surge of migration began after 2000, when *cayucos*, larger boats, started to arrive to the Canary shores and the number of migrants increased steadily (Interview with J. Naranjo, held on September 30, 2016). One of the reasons for increased immigration to the Canary Islands in the 90s and 2000s was that Europe had helped to re-enforce the northern enclaves, namely the borders of Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco, as well as the Strait of Gibraltar (Finotelli, 2018; interview with D. Godenau, held on July 6, 2016). As a consequence, migrants were searching for an alternative route to enter Europe.

In response to increased migration to the Canaries, many irregular immigrants were sent to the Spanish peninsula. For instance, the mayor of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria at that time, Jose Manuel Soria, began sending unidentified or un-deportable migrants to mainland Spain (interview with J. Naranjo, held onSeptember 30, 2016). This became known as the "Soria doctrine." It consisted in sending migrants living on the streets of the municipality of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria to Madrid, so they could be closer to their embassies, in the hope that this would facilitate the normalization of their legal status in Spain or allow them to travel to other European countries<sup>3</sup>.

By 2006, the number of immigrants overwhelmed the Island's border enforcement and the retention centres where migrants are usually housed. Throughout the 90s, the total number of migrants who had reached the Canary Islands' shores was 1000, but in 2006 the number of irregular entries peaked at 31 678 (Ministerio del Interior, 2016). From 2006 to 2009, irregular immigration to the Canary Islands experienced an upsurge. Chart 1 shows the number of undocumented irregular migrants who arrived to the Canary Islands. Note the increased number between 2006 and 2009 during the crisis and a slight uptick in 2015 and 2016 at the beginning of the recent European-wide migrant crisis.

<sup>3.</sup> ABC. 2002. «El PSOE adopta la "doctrina Soria" sobre el traslado de inmigrantes irregulares». Available at: https://bit.ly/2BZHUIr.





Sources: Own elaboration with data from Ministerio del Interior: Inmigración irregular: balance 2015. Lucha contra la inmigración irregular [available at: https://bit.ly/2tRJZmH]; Inmigración irregular: balance 2016. Lucha contra la inmigración irregular [available at: https://bit.ly/2T8i6nO]; Inmigración irregular: informe semanal del 25 a 31 de diciembre. Lucha contra la inmigración irregular [available at: https://bit.ly/2n5zcko].

### SOLVING THE CAYUCO CRISIS

Irregular migrants fall under EU legislation, specifically Schengen as already mentioned, as well as Spanish legislation. The act that lays out the status, rights and duties of migrants in Spain is the Organic Law 2/2009 on the Rights and Freedoms of Foreigners in Spain and their Social Integration, commonly referred to as the Spanish Aliens Act<sup>4</sup>. It establishes the framework for the treatment of irregular migrants, regulates foreigners' rights and duties in Spain and contains principles that seek to

<sup>4.</sup> Ley Orgánica 2/2009, de 11 de diciembre, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social.

promote legal immigration, with the goal of restricting to a minimum the entry of irregular migrants. It offers opportunities to immigrants established in Spanish territory in irregular conditions to normalize their situation. As a general rule, this law establishes the recognition of the rights granted by the Spanish Constitution, international treaties interpreted in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other existing treaties on citizens' rights. Thus, although one could argue that Schengen has placed parameters on Spain's immigration policy, the Aliens Act is a law the Spanish state put into place to establish Spanish rules and norms of immigration beyond the general framework of Schengen. In this way, one might assume that EU hard governance is at work holding Spain accountable for the appropriate treatment of migrants.

During the *cayuco* crisis, EU soft governance was also applied, which included support by member states via Frontex and also promoting the EU's externalization of migration policy (Triandafyllidou, 2014). Externalization of migration policy as prescribed at the Tampere Council included Spain's adoption of Plan Africa and its signing of repatriation agreements with several African countries including: Algeria, Morocco, Senegal, Mauritania, Gambia, Guinea, Mali and Ghana<sup>5</sup>. EU soft governance, was able to strengthen the central role of the state in dealing with the crisis and achieve Spain's preferences, stopping the migration, as liberal intergovernmentalists assert.

The *cayuco* crisis was resolved through the coordinated action of multiple levels of governments and assistance from NGOs. The institutional framework that structures the governance of migration policy in Spain includes both the national and regional levels of government. National government, under the Spanish Ministry of the Interior, handles security, detention of migrants in the high seas, identification, possible repatriation and the management of retention centres (Frontex, 2017). The Ministry of Employment and Social Security is in charge of implementing migration policy and integration of migrants in Spanish society (Global Detention Project, 2016). At the regional level, the Autonomous Communities (ACs), are responsible for unaccompanied minors, whereas the integration of migrants into Canary society belongs to the municipality, the lowest level of government. ACs have the legal responsibility of placing and integrating minors after their identification, and become the AC's responsibility and are under the jurisdiction of the regional department of protection of minors (Asín Cabrera, 2007). Most unaccompanied minors remain in the islands because of the complexities associated with the repatriation process or displacement of unaccompanied minors to another AC (ibid. 2007).

On May 21<sup>st</sup> 2006, in the midst of the *cayuco* crisis, the Canary Islands government requested the Spanish government to 'armor the coast' and in response Spain

BBC. 2007. «Spain begins anti-migration ads». Available at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/7004139.stm

called for an emergency fund from the European Union<sup>6</sup>. The next day, the Vice-President of Spain, María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, travelled to Brussels to ask for help in controlling irregular migration and securing Spain's Southern border<sup>7</sup>.

The EU's response, however, was slow and member states such as Germany and the Netherlands blamed the surge of irregular migrants on Spain's poor management of their borders in 2005, whereby 600 000 irregular migrants were allowed to enter (Monar, 2007). Spain argued that migrants were coming from Francophone African countries trying to reach France (Monar, 2007). In the end, Spain ended up receiving support from Italy, which was experiencing similar problems. Tensions and the lack of support from other member states highlights the north-south divide regarding migration policy and heavier pressures southern European countries face due to their geographic proximity to Africa, as well as their practices of normalizing the legal status of irregular migrants, which becomes a pull-factor for migrants (Finotelli, 2018; Monar, 2007).

In response to Spain's request, member states eventually supported Frontex providing assistance. Frontex was created in 2004 to ensure European norms on immigration and border management are followed according to standards of Integrated Border Management and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU. Frontex lacks its own border guards and equipment, instead it relies on EU member states to deploy experts and equipment (Frontex, 2015). Frontex develops plans of action and conducts research by creating a workforce with officials from member states that exchange ideas in an informal setting or soft governance (Godenau and López Sala, 2016; Graziano and Halpern, 2016). The goal of voluntary coordination is to define common objectives and cognitive principles rather than achieving harmonization. According to Council Regulation No. 2007/2004, forming Frontex, article 4 states,

The responsibility for the control and surveillance of external borders lies with the Member States. The Agency (Frontex) should facilitate the application of existing and future Community measures relating to the management of external borders by ensuring the coordination of Member States, actions in the implementation of those measures (Council of the European Union, 2004:2).

Frontex's involvement in the *cayuco* crisis was really a test case since it was Frontex's first major joint aero maritime operation, HERA. The European Parliament passed two plans of action, HERA I and HERA II, signed in 2006. HERA I consisted of the assistance for surveillance duties in high seas and identification of migrants. It

<sup>6.</sup> El Mundo Agencias. 2006. «De la Vega viaja hoy a Bruselas para reclamar ayuda ante la crisis migratoria de Canarias». Available at: http://www.elmundo.es/elmundo/2006/05/23/espana/1148357662. html.

<sup>7.</sup> Some scholars of MLG suggest that often times regional governments circumvent the state and interact directly with the EU (Hooghe and Marks, 2001), but in this instance, the state intervened at the request of the Autonomous Community, and sought assistance at the EU level.

began on July 17, 2006 when European countries sent nine experts —more were sent later— to the Canary Islands to help Spanish authorities identify migrants that had arrived through irregular channels (Frontex, 2006).

HERA II expanded efforts with the goal of improving the Spanish authority's sea surveillance. Beginning on August 11 2006, HERA II included several EU member states sending equipment in order to stop migrants from arriving to the islands. Frontex's intervention meant a significant decrease in migrants in a short amount of time. HERA I and II were successful because they accomplished the European Union goal, to secure its most southern border from irregular immigration. The Spanish government's Policía Nacional, working with experts from other countries and using more advanced equipment, managed to identify all 18 987 migrants that arrived to the islands between July 17, 2006 and December 10, 2006 (*ibid.*). HERA I and II, as a result of the information obtained in the interviewing process of migrants, also facilitated the detention of several smugglers in sub-Saharan Africa, hence decreasing the number of more potential irregular migrants (*ibid.*).

Frontex's actions are an example of soft governance and Europeanization. Spain maintains the competency to protect the integrity of its borders, but as more migrants poured into the islands or were dying at sea, the Spanish government thought it imperative to seek the assistance of EU and member state resources. Frontex was designed to create greater solidarity in the protection of Europe's borders and depends on the support of member states and their cooperation with one another (Frontex European Border and Coast Guard Agency, 2018). National contributions to Frontex are voluntary. Frontex's intervention and the cooperation of technical experts across several member states was a way for soft governance to allow several public and private actors to be part of the policymaking and implementation of border control and management and care of migrants in the Canary Islands, contributing to alleviating the crisis.

The EU does not require Frontex intervention and Frontex will only act at the behest and with the assistance of member states, thus hard governance does not apply to Frontex action, since there is no legal imperative. However, with member states cooperating via Frontex it created an opportunity for networks of policing forces from other EU countries, EU officials and Spanish policing forces to work together and share knowledge and practices in order to help stave off deaths at sea and to process migrants (Interview with D. Godenau, held on July 6, 2016; interview with a member of the National Police Force, held on August 11, 2016). Here we see the Europeanization of managing border controls as networks of experts in the field were able to share best practices promoting diffusion of implementation ideas, and 'ways of doing things' that could be incorporated into public policy implementation (Radaelli, 2000).

## EU AND SPANISH MIGRATION POLICIES: FAILED HARD GOVERNANCE

Even with the application of Schengen and the constraints EU law places on Spanish migration laws, EU hard governance was not enough to keep Spain accountable to

its own laws or European ones. The implementation of the Spanish Alien's Act establishes the framework for the treatment of irregular immigrants in the Canary Islands. One of the responsibilities of the state in accordance with Spanish, EU and international laws is to provide retention centers for immigrants. In the Canary Islands there are three centers for migrants and national authorities set up another building to contend with the larger influx of migrants both before and after the *cayuco* crisis (Global Detention Project, 2016). These are the Centers for Foreign Internment or Centros de Internamiento de Extranjeros (CIEs). The national government adapted additional buildings during the crisis to become temporary CIEs: an abandoned terminal in Fuerteventura and a former prison in Tenerife (Global Detention Project, 2016). In accordance with the Spanish Alien's Act migrants could spend up to forty days at the CIEs until they sort out their legal status in Spain —the law was reformed in 2009 and increased this period to sixty days<sup>8</sup>. Within forty days, migrants had to qualify for refugee or asylum seeker status, or else they would be sent back to their countries of origin. Migrants are to be put in contact with attorneys to help them apply for asylum and possibly reunite with their families, through the process called family reunification<sup>9</sup>. If the nationality of a migrant is not clear, or if Spain has no repatriation agreement with the country, the migrants will be released from the detention centers and become the municipality's responsibility.

EU and Spanish law provide the framework within which the Spanish state should treat and process migrants. In this way, one might assume that EU hard governance is at work holding Spain accountable for the appropriate treatment of migrants. However, according to a report of Amnesty International in 2006 on the cayuco crisis, the rights of irregular migrants were violated (Amnesty International, 2006). The report denounced the Spanish state for not complying with EU law in accordance with the Charter of Fundamental Rights. Migrants were not informed about their situation once they arrived to the police station, the process of return, nor were they asked if they were at risk in their home countries. As an example, out of 6 908 people that arrived to Tenerife in January-June 2006, only 9 of them applied for asylum (Amnesty International, 2006). Many of them did not know that they could apply for political asylum claiming persecution because of racial or ethnic discrimination, war, homophobia and similar circumstances that certainly are a reality in their countries of origin (ibid.). Also, there was a significant language barrier for migrants. They had access to translators of French and English; however, most reported that their mother tongue was Wolof. Without adequate translators it became virtually impossible for them to understand their rights (ibid.).

<sup>8. (</sup>Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social; Ley Orgánica 2/2009, de 11 de diciembre, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social.

Ley Orgánica 4/2000, de 11 de enero, sobre derechos y libertades de los extranjeros en España y su integración social.

Amnesty International (2006) also identified that there were not enough resources dedicated to identifying the migrants. It is a challenge for local authorities to guess their nationalities, since migrants might identify themselves more with a tribe or ethnicity that does not necessarily correspond with a state or government authority. Most migrants are identified as Senegalese, since it is in the interest of Spain to identify nationals of countries with which the Spanish government has repatriation treaties, such as Senegal. Furthermore, migrants were not put in contact with attorneys as soon as they arrived at the CIEs. Many migrants reported that they only met their attorneys on the day of the trial, and were not granted a translator (*ibid.*).

Thus, although the EU's hard governance set up parameters within which migrants must be treated, the Spanish government did not fully comply, but rather worked within their means or willingness to deal with the migrant crisis irrespective of meeting EU requirements. In this way, although hard governance is technically present, there is a lack of enforcement of EU law. Frontex was able to assist with capturing and processing migrants, but the care of migrants was left to the state and non-state actors such as the Spanish Red Cross and Caritas (a church sponsored organization). The Red Cross and Caritas took the lead in assisting migrants and providing health and social intervention, and yet certain migrant rights were still not fully protected, demonstrating a failure of EU hard governance, in part due to the lack of resources and EU oversight during the crisis. As has been demonstrated with the current crisis, similar issues regarding the violation of migrants' rights as the EU has limited oversight and mechanisms to force compliance on the ground. Examples of countries violating EU law include Germany's ignoring of the Dublin Agreement requiring registration at the country of origin and Hungary constructing a border wall with other member states.

# IMPORTANT SOFT POWER, THE EXTERNALIZATION OF EU MIGRATION POLICY

An integral part of decreasing the number of African migrants arriving to the Canary Islands shores was the externalization of EU migration policy (Triandafyllidou, 2014). In 1999, the externalization of EU migration policy found strong support from the European Council and at the Tampere meeting in 1999, "partnership with the country of origin" became a major goal of the Council regarding Common Asylum and Migration Policy (European Council, 1999). The Conclusions of the Tampere meeting supported the notion of co-development between the EU and third countries to improve conditions of underdeveloped areas that are the source of migration (European Council, 1999). Currently, the EU has an EU Emergency Trust Fund for Africa which implements the ideals of the Tampere Council meeting (European Commission, 2017).

Similar to the Tampere Council conclusions, Spain also created an Official Development Aid Plan referred to as Plan Africa. Plan Africa was a development program

with several migrants' home countries which included the opening of new embassies on the continent and the promotion of trade relations with the migrants' main countries of origin to improve their economies. Approved for 2006-2008, Plan Africa was not simply a development plan to improve living conditions in Saharan Africa, but a plan to increase Spanish influence in specific African countries, and to prevent irregular migration to the Canary Islands. The plan was based around seven objectives: contributing to the consolidation of democracy; fighting against poverty; promoting cooperation to regulate migration flows; participating in the development of an EU's strategy towards Africa; strengthening economic exchanges and encourage investment — especially in relation to energy security and hydrocarbons; encouraging cultural cooperation; and increasing the institutional presence of Spain (Alcalde, 2007).

Mauritania's outcome with Plan Africa is particularly noteworthy since it was successful in its goal of stopping irregular migration. As part of Plan Africa, members of the Spanish National Police and another group of Spanish Civil Guards travelled to Mauritania to partner with a group of Mauritanian state policemen. In addition, Spain also assisted in strengthening the Mauritanian's national police providing some equipment<sup>10</sup>. All these measures had the goal of preventing migrants from departing the Mauritanian coast and/or stopping them at Mauritanian seas. Spain also invested over 150 million euros in Mauritania for different economic development plans.<sup>11</sup>

Plan Africa is a result of EU soft governance. Using the policy ideas of the Tampere Council and EU initiatives, Spain created a similar program to combat migration at its source using development and enhancing policing capabilities within the home countries of migrants. Plan Africa, coupled with assistance from Frontex were both sources of EU soft governance that strengthened the Spanish state's ability to stave off migration and to end the *cayuco* crisis. In the end, Spain was able to achieve its preferences, lessening migration, thus strengthening the states governance over migration supporting a more liberal-intergovernmentalist perspective as it relates to migration policy, but at the same time adopting EU policy prescriptions voluntarily or a Europeanization of EU governance using soft governance supporting the assertions of neo-institutionalists.

### RELATION TO THE CURRENT CRISIS

The response to the *cayuco* crisis and its aftermath sheds light on how Europeanization of EU migration policy has been applied to the current migrant crisis, as well as how neo-institutional and liberal intergovernmental assertions relate to migration policy. The Spanish response to the *cayuco* crisis was Plan Africa, which

<sup>10.</sup> Peregil, Francisco. 2015. «Así se detuvo el éxodo de migrantes en cayucos desde África occidental», *EL PAÍS*. Available at: https://bit.ly/2Ub8lSm.

<sup>11.</sup> Id.

clearly constituted a form of EU soft governance. Although the state remained the main actor, Spain adopted the EU policy prescriptions to set up a developmental program and a relationship with several African countries that were major countries of origin, such as Senegal and Mauritania. Likewise, in response to the migrant crisis that emerged in 2015 throughout Europe, the EU established an agreement with Turkey —the EU-Turkey Joint Action Plan and Turkey Facilitation— to stop migrants from leaving Turkish refugee camps. Unlike the Spanish Plan Africa, the agreement with Turkey was a European one, although made at the behest of Germany. This agreement provides financial assistance to Turkey to fund the refugee camps<sup>12</sup>. In addition, a "one-in one-out" system went into effect, whereby refugees from Turkish camps who were found entering Europe illegally would be sent back to Turkey and an equal number of people waiting in Turkish refugee camps and following the proper channels would be allowed into Europe. This migrant swap was meant to be a deterrent to adversely affect the "pull" factor for migrants. Since the countries of origin in the current crisis, in particular Syria, do not have functioning governments, the EU could not negotiate or send aid directly to them. At this time, the policy idea was similar as the one underlying Plan Africa, but it is an EU initiative at the behest of pressures from member states. The one-in one-out policy is akin to repatriation agreements that Spain signed in association with the aid of Plan Africa.

In addition, the EU has created regional trust funds to deal with both the influx of Syrian and African migration. The EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis is voluntarily funded by twenty two member states and the EU, amounting to 1.4 billion euro to assist refugees in Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey with humanitarian and non-humanitarian needs such as "basic education and child protection, training and higher education, access to healthcare, infrastructure and economic opportunity" (European Commission, 2016). Likewise, the EU has set up an Africa Trust Fund which the EU and member states contribute to in order to promote development in the region, reducing the "push" factors of migration as well as improving the management of migration at the source.

In the current migrant crisis, we see in a sense the "double image reversed" and it being reflected back again. During the *cayuco* crisis the Spanish state adopted EU policy prescriptions and in the current crisis, states are calling on the EU to follow similar measures including providing aid at the source of migration in addition to member state financial contributions, and shoring up Europe's borders with Frontex, as was done during the *cayuco* crisis. Member states have remained central actors in the current crisis limiting a European response to a European problem that has "structural inequalities and asymmetric shocks" (Cornelisse, 2014: 12).

<sup>12.</sup> It began in 2015, when Turkey received 3 billion euros; this increased to 6 billion in 2016; payments continued until 2018.

### **CONCLUSION**

The *cayuco* crisis and its aftermath demonstrate how the EU can shape migration policy by utilizing both hard and soft governance mechanisms. During that crisis, Schengen and its requirements to create common standards to people crossing Europe's borders framed the parameters within which the Spanish government could act. However, with the lack of EU enforcement mechanisms and such a large influx of migrants in a short period of time, meeting the requirements of Schengen were not fully adhered to (Amnesty International, 2006). On the other hand, EU soft governance in accordance with ideals from the Tampere Council of 1999 and with the creation of Frontex assisted in staving off the migration crisis. The externalization of migration policy, that was adopted from EU practices first espoused in the Tampere Council in 1999, helped shape the response to the stark increase in immigrants to the Canary Islands. Spain implemented repatriation agreements coordinated policing efforts with African countries and provided development programs, and was thus able to stop immigration at its point of origin, which was its governance goal to stave off west African migration. In addition, Spain requested the assistance from Frontex, which is dependent on the will and contributions of other member states. The European policing and border control networks assisted in intercepting boats at sea and capturing smugglers (Member of National Police, interview, August 11 2016).

The *cayuco* crisis informs our understanding of how the EU can shape migration policy. Although Schengen with hard governance sets parameters for what member states can and cannot do regarding migration policy, it is also clear that member states do not always fulfil their legal obligations. However, soft governance, in the form of Plan Africa and Frontex intervention, became instrumental bringing an end to the *cayuco* crisis. The europeanization of migration policy, or the adoption by Spain of ideals that were initially EU policy prescriptions, including the externalization of migration policy, was voluntarily applied to the crisis. Thus, EU soft governance shaped Spain's response to the migration crisis as neo-instutitionalists would assert, but Spain remained the main actor as liberal intergovernmentalists claim.

Looking at the current migration crisis, EU member states and European institutions have followed a similar model to the one used in the *cayuco* crisis. First of all, Frontex has again been brought in to help migrants at sea and to secure Europe's maritime borders; second of all, the externalization of migration policy with an agreement with Turkey that is similar to Plan Africa, without the capability of dealing directly with the country of origin, namely Syria. Although the EU has attempted to implement quotas to more equitably spread the burden of immigration across Europe and to institute hard governance in the current migrant crisis, the EU has failed because it lacks mechanisms to enforce compliance while member states refuse to follow its mandates. Thus, states remain the main actors shaping implementation of migration policy, just as Spain did during the *cayuco* crisis.

As immigrants continue to come to Europe's shores, asymmetries of the impact between north and south will continue. However, the ideals from the Tampere Council, which shaped the response to the *cayuco* crisis and its positive outcome reducing immigration have inspired similar policies in the current crisis, suggesting that although member states continue asserting themselves, the soft governance of Europeanization does play an important role in the governance of migration policy across EU member states.

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